



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE FRICK BROUGHT TO YOU BY FIRST NIAGARA PRESENTS GREG ABATE

2011 summer concert season begins with jazz performance by accomplished saxophonist and flutist

Date/time: Friday, June 3, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
Admission: A donation of \$5 per adult is suggested



PITTSBURGH, PA, May 25, 2011—The Frick Art & Historical Center opens the 2011 season of *FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE FRICK BROUGHT TO YOU BY FIRST NIAGARA* with a performance by jazz saxophonist, flutist and recording artist Greg Abate and his trio. The Friday, June 3, 2011 performance takes place on the Great Lawn at the Frick Art & Historical Center and begins at 7:00 p.m. Guests are invited to come early and create a gourmet picnic with selections from the award-winning Café at the Frick, which begins serving at 5:30 p.m. The Frick Art Museum, Car and Carriage Museum and Museum Shop will remain open until 10:00 p.m. Admission to museums is always free. Free parking is available in the Frick's off-street lot, or along adjacent neighborhood streets.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Greg Abate, jazz saxophonist, flutist, composer, and international jazz recording artist, spends around 150 days a year touring the globe. After graduating from the Berklee College of Music, Greg played lead alto for the Ray Charles Orchestra for two years before forming his group Channel One, a favorite in the New England area. From 1986 to 1987, he played tenor sax with the revived Artie Shaw Orchestra under the leadership of Dick Johnson. Greg then ventured out as a soloist, playing jazz festivals and clubs throughout the U.S., Canada and abroad, including most of Europe, the United Kingdom and Russia.

Abate recorded his first CD, *Live at Birdland NYC*, in 1991 on the Candid label with James Williams, Rufus Reid and Kenny Washington. He has more than 12 other albums and was nominated for a Grammy in four categories for his 2004 recording *Evolution*, which included James Williams, Harvie S. and Billy Hart. Greg is an adjunct professor of jazz studies at Rhode Island College and is an active jazz clinician with sponsorship from the Conn-Selmer Instrument Co., conducting workshops and master classes through the U.S and abroad.

James Johnson III began playing the drums at the age of five in his hometown of Pittsburgh. He attended CAPA, Pittsburgh's high school for the creative and performing arts, where he came under the mentorship of drummer Roger Humphries and was introduced to his biggest musical influence, drummer Will Kennedy. At age 15, James became a permanent fixture on the Pittsburgh jazz scene. In 1998, he served as drum clinician at the Mellon Student Jazz Spectacular. After high school, James was invited to tour with jazz legend Ahmad Jamal. As a member of the Ahmad Jamal Trio, he appeared at major festivals like the Cully (Switzerland), North Sea Jazz (South Africa) and Dublin jazz festivals. He has performed with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, James Moody, Benny Golson, Mulgrew Miller, and Kenny Werner. James is on staff at the Afro-American Music Institute and conducts workshops and clinics in the public school system. As a composer, his contributions to *Temporary Suspension*, the debut recording of the quartet *Metaphor*, marks the arrival of a new voice in contemporary jazz.

Alton Merrell, pianist, Hammond B-3 organist, music educator, and composer, is currently a lecturer and PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh with an anticipated graduation date of April 2012. Alton holds a master of music degree in jazz piano performance and a Bachelor of Music degree in music education/classical piano performance from Youngstown State University. Alton is the founder of Minstrel Enterprises LLC, a music ministry providing concerts, seminars, music instruction, music consulting, arranging, and studio production services. He leads his own group, Alton Merrell & the Tribe of Levi, an instrumental and vocal ensemble incorporating diverse musical styles in their repertoire. The mission of his group is to create music that will minister love, healing, joy, deliverance and peace to people around the world. Alton's latest award-winning CD, *You're The Reason*, embodies this vision.

Pittsburgher **Dave Pellow** had his first exposure to jazz when listening to his father, James Pellow, a tenor saxophonist who had performed with bands like Raymond Scott and Jack Teagarden. Dave has performed with musicians including The Deuces Wild, Nathan Davis, Harold Betters, Joe Negri, Roger Humphries, Walt Harper, Kenny Blake, Frank Cunimondo, Benny Benack, Sr., and Benny Benack, Jr., and David and Maureen Budway. As a bassist, Dave has performed with jazz greats including Billy Eckstine, Dakota Staton, Louie Bellson, Mose Allison, Jimmy Ponder, Bucky Pizzarelli, Kenny Rankin, Herb Ellis and Charlie Byrd, Salsamba, The Bobby Negri Trio, Ernie Hawkins, Dianne Schuur, James Moody, John Faddis, Warren Vaché, and Steve Allen. As an educator, Dave played jazz for every third and fifth grader in the Pittsburgh Public Schools from 1991 to 1998 through a program offered by The Manchester Craftsman's Guild. At Carnegie Mellon University, Dave was a teaching professor and director of jazz studies from 2001 to 2009, and produced many concerts that featured such internationally acclaimed artists as Jay Ashby, Roger Humphries and Jeff 'Tain' Watts.

Greg Abate performs with his trio at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 3, 2011, on the grounds of the Frick Art & Historical Center.

FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE FRICK BROUGHT TO YOU BY FIRST NIAGARA

First Niagara is corporate sponsor of the 17th season of the *First Fridays at the Frick* summer outdoor concert series.

ABOUT THE FRICK ART & HISTORICAL CENTER

The Frick Art & Historical Center is the legacy of Helen Clay Frick, daughter of 19th-century industrialist and art collector Henry Clay Frick. Having established The Frick Art Museum in 1969, Miss Frick desired that her family home, Clayton, and the surrounding estate be preserved for, and opened to, the people of Pittsburgh after her death. Her vision was realized in 1990.

Today, the Frick Art & Historical Center houses a galaxy of collections—including fine arts, decorative arts, automobiles and carriages, and historic artifacts— in multiple galleries and venues, many of which are historic objects in and of themselves. These collections, and the programs that interpret them, illuminate the era during which Pittsburgh became one of the nation's most important cities and also make meaningful connections to contemporary times. Although still a relatively young institution, the Frick ranks among Pittsburgh's most important cultural and educational assets.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Frick Art & Historical Center is located at 7227 Reynolds Street in Pittsburgh's Point Breeze neighborhood. Free parking is available in the Frick's off-street lot or along adjacent streets. The Frick is open 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday and closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission to The Frick Art Museum, Car and Carriage Museum, Greenhouse, and Playhouse is free. The public should call 412-371-0600 for information, or visit the Frick online at TheFrickPittsburgh.org.

For additional information or images, please contact Greg Langel, Media and Marketing Manager, at 412-371-0600 ext. 524 or GLangel@TheFrickPittsburgh.org.

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The Frick Art & Historical Center, a museum, historic site and cultural center serves the public through preservation, presentation, and interpretation of the fine and decorative arts and historically significant artifacts for all residents of and visitors to Western Pennsylvania.